

who have fought with courage and conviction for justice and equity, and it is because of them that we as a Nation have progressed.

The late Congresswoman Patsy Takemoto Mink is one such person. Today I rise in support of H.R. 406 which celebrates the accomplishments of Congresswoman Mink and the passage of Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments. Title IX, also known as the Equal Opportunity in Education Act, prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in the administration of education programs.

Congresswoman Mink, a courageous champion of women's rights, once declared, "All persons regardless of their sex, must have enough opportunities open so that they can contribute as much to their lives and this society as they can." Mink served 12 terms in this House representing Hawaii, and throughout those 12 terms, she was steadfast in her commitment to social justice. Due to her stalwart conviction, Title IX and its enactment are responsible for increased educational opportunities for women and girls. As such, among women, high school graduation rates have risen to 85 percent, those earning bachelors degrees have reached 26 percent, and employment opportunities are ever improving. It is because of Title IX that our country's women and girls are able to pursue their dreams without the hindrances of institutionalized oppression. As a result of Title IX, our women are able to learn, grow, and thrive unapologetically.

It must, however, be noted that despite this undeniable progress, there still remains much work to be done. H.R. 406 enumerates the numerous arenas in which women must still battle for fair and equitable treatment. To this day, women are still victims of sexual harassment in the workplace, salary inequality in comparison to their male counterparts, and limited access to career opportunities in the fields of math and science. Let us not become complacent and find solace in the status quo, as true equality has yet to be attained.

The 35 years since enactment of Title IX can be lauded as 35 years of progress. We must continue to commemorate the legislatures and the legislation that propel our country forward. We must continue to work towards a future in which social ills such as bigotry and sex discrimination are of the past. Let us take pride in what has been accomplished by pioneers such as Congresswoman Mink while continuing the fight for equality, justice, and the realization of the American dream.

TRIBUTE TO ANNETTE ROLLE

HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 19, 2007

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Madam Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to a woman who has dedicated her life to the service of others, Annette Rolle. Soon, she will retire after 37 years at the Cedars Medical Center located in Miami, FL. Ms. Rolle has served our community with great distinction, and for her years of service, we in South Florida are immeasurably thankful.

During Ms. Rolle's 37 years at Cedars Medical Center, she worked as a CRCS Technician, as the Assistant Director of Central Services and as the Central Services Manager.

She made it her mission to provide a higher standard of care for people in need. Ms. Rolle did all of these things out of her genuine care for people. She provides blood pressure screening to members of her church and encourages others to donate blood and become organ donors.

Her commitment to service is not only evident in her professional life but in her personal life as well; Ms. Rolle has been a faithful member of Greater New Bethel Baptist Church, where her Pastor has been Reverend Dr. G. David Horton, for over twenty years. She serves as a member of the Pastor's Aide, Mission Ministry, Ushers' Ministry, Nurses' Guild and Sunday School Ministry.

Annette Rolle is the wife of the late Steven L. Rolle Jr.; the proud mother of two beautiful daughters, Alesia Evans and Stephanie S. Rolle; and the exuberant grandmother of La'Nesia Smith. Her extended family includes three stepchildren, Judye, Vonn, and Steven Rolle III.

Annette Rolle's compassion and concern for those less fortunate in our community are virtues that we all should aspire to. Ms. Rolle is a person of character, who saves lives both inside and outside of the hospital. Her life is an example to both young and old that living a life of purpose is the greatest achievement. She has given herself tirelessly to her church, community, and profession. Annette Rolle is a courageous spirit and is deserving of our accolades.

On behalf of a grateful community, I salute Annette Rolle. Now, in retirement, she embarks upon a new journey, and I wish her every happiness and success.

RECOGNIZING THE HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF JUNETEENTH INDEPENDENCE DAY

HON. AL GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 19, 2007

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, I am proud to be a co-sponsor of H. Con. Res. 155, a resolution recognizing the historical significance of Juneteenth Independence Day. "Juneteenth" is celebrated annually on June 19th to recognize the full emancipation of slaves in the State of Texas. President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation freeing the slaves across the country on January 1, 1863. Unfortunately, slaves in Texas did not feel the effect of this monumental decision until 2½ years later. The Emancipation Proclamation had little effect on African Americans in Texas due to the minimal number of Union troops that were present in Texas to enforce the new executive order.

The Union troops led by General Gordon Granger landed in Galveston, Texas on June 19, 1865. Upon General Granger's arrival there was massive resistance from the slave owners, regarding the presence of Union troops in the State. Despite much opposition, Union forces soon became strong enough to influence and overcome that resistance. Granger said, "The people of Texas are informed that in accordance with a Proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free. This involves an absolute equality of rights and rights of property be-

tween former masters and slaves, and the connection heretofore existing between them becomes that between employer and free laborer."

Madam Speaker, the injustice that was committed against the African American slaves held captive against their will was immense, as was the injustice committed against those held past the captivity date. Had General Gordon and his troops not taken the initiative to make the trip to Texas, there is no telling when these slaves would have realized their freedom.

I am compelled to recognize the historical significance of "Juneteenth" because the monumental date of June 19, 1865 represents the realization of freedom and justice for all. This date symbolizes the genius of our country's struggle to bring about a more perfect union, a struggle that continues to this very day. Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support and recognize the historical significance of the Juneteenth Independence Day.

HONORING THE LONG-TERM RESOURCE MONITORING PROGRAM

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 19, 2007

Mr. KIND. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the USGS Upper Midwest Environmental Sciences Center Long Term Resource Monitoring Program (LTRMP) for the Cooperative Conservation award they received from the U.S. Department of Interior.

Established in 1986 through the Water Resources Development Act, the LTRMP plays a key role in the Environmental Management Program. It is implemented by the United States Geological Survey office in Onalaska, Wisconsin in cooperation with five Upper Mississippi River States: Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, and Wisconsin.

This model partnership of Federal, State and local agencies is an integral part of research done on the Upper Mississippi River System and a prime example of teamwork.

Congress recognized the Upper Mississippi River System as both a nationally significant ecosystem and a nationally significant commercial navigation system. Accordingly, the mission of the Long Term Resource Monitoring Program is to provide decision makers with the information needed to maintain the Upper Mississippi River System as a viable multiple-use large river ecosystem. The long-term goals are to understand the system, determine resource trends and impacts, develop management alternatives, manage information, and develop useful products.

The LTRMP, through six remote State-operated field stations, has provided critical data collection, analyses, research and modeling of the environmental components of vegetation, water levels and quality, fishes and invertebrates. It was one of the pioneers in geo-spatial information systems, documenting land use and land cover mapping and analysis. This data is vital for planning, design, and assessment of restoration and rehabilitation projects. It is the LTRMP that provides a knowledge base for effective, cost-efficient habitat projects and then documents their success.

The LTRMP continues to be the most consistent, comprehensive large river monitoring program in the world. More than 200,000 data observations have been collected to evaluate important short- and long-term changes associated with ecological components of the UMRs.

On multiple occasions, I toured this amazing facility and witnessed the ongoing and award-winning research. I am proud to have it not only in my district, but in my hometown.

THE OMNIBUS AUTISM HEARINGS

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 19, 2007

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Madam Speaker, I rise tonight to talk about the Omnibus Autism Hearing which started on June 11, 2007, down at the U.S. Federal Claims Court here in Washington, DC. At issue are the 4,800 claims against the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program filed by parents of autistic children who believe, as I do, that thimerosal—the mercury-based preservative in vaccines—caused their children's disorders.

There are many people in our health agencies, in the pharmaceutical industry and here in Congress who say that there is no the scientific evidence linking thimerosal and autism. However, during my tenure as chairman of Government Reform Committee (1997–2002), and as chairman of the Subcommittee on Human Rights and Wellness (2003–2005), I chaired numerous hearings examining the alarming increase in autism in this country over the last several decades. In the 1980s, roughly one in 10,000 American children was diagnosed with some kind of autism spectrum disorder. Today that number has risen to 1 in 150. I believe, as do many credible scientists and researchers, that the clear correlation between the dramatic rise in the number of autism cases, and the rapid expansion of the childhood vaccination schedule during that 20-year period, points to the mercury-based preservative thimerosal—routinely used in pediatric vaccines during the period—as a contributing factor to our country's literal epidemic of autism. In fact, I firmly believe my own grandson became autistic after receiving nine shots in 1 day, seven of which contained thimerosal. In fact, Dr. Bernard Rimland—founder and director of the Autism Research Institute—testified before the committee that classic autism, (noticeable from birth) has largely been replaced by late-onset or “acquired autism”; a form of autism in which children are born normally developing but later regress into autism in the second year of life. He was one of the first to point to environmental insult through vaccine injury as a possible leading contributing factor.

The truth is that since the initiation of my vaccine investigation, two schools of science have evolved leading to two very different conclusions. The first, largely funded by the Centers for Disease Control, consist of epidemiological evaluations in Denmark that look at medical files in individuals who developed autism and deciding whether or not thimerosal exposure was more predominant in the autism patients. Those who have focused solely on the epidemiology research have concluded

that there is no relationship between vaccine injury and the onset of autism. However, once published, these studies were discovered to have many methodological flaws. For example, using individuals in Denmark did not provide a true comparison to the U.S. vaccine schedule, and by the CDC's own admission, the study could not really provide any true conclusion as to whether or not a subset of the population—because of vaccine exposure to mercury or some other vaccine injury—developed autism.

The second school of research has conducted so-called “hard” science; providing objective measures through laboratory and animal research. For example, Dr. Hornig at Columbia University replicated the thimerosal exposure in vaccines in a mouse study and discovered mice exposed to thimerosal had both behavioral and biological responses—displaying autism like behaviors and exhibiting white matter changes in the brain that were measurable. Other laboratory research has shown that thimerosal exposure affects the protective sheath of the neurofibrils in the brain as well as the IGF-I molecule. And Dr. Jill James at the University of Arkansas has shown that thimerosal exposure affects the methylation process—the mechanism used to regulate genes and protect DNA from some types of damage.

The most recent hard science study to be published is from Dr. Burbacher, a leading expert on mercury, who investigated the different affect methyl mercury and ethyl mercury had on primates. He found that ethylmercury—the form of mercury in thimerosal—stays in the brain (doing more harm) than methylmercury.

The bottom line is that mercury is a base element and the most toxic substance known to science outside of radioactive materials; and each of these hard science studies, and more, show that it is biologically plausible for mercury exposure in vaccines to cause the onset of autism and provide tantalizing pieces in the puzzle about how.

My support for the link between thimerosal and autism, especially in open congressional hearings has caused many people to throw around the accusation that I am “anti-vaccine.” My response to that is that vaccines are the only medications that are mandatory for Americans to receive and as such we have an even greater obligation to ensure that they are as safe as possible. In addition, experience tells us that, as with any other epidemic, while there may be underlying genetic susceptibilities, there usually is some type of environmental trigger as well, such as a virus, fungus, exposure to heavy metals, pollutants, or whatever. There has never, to the best of my knowledge, been a purely genetic epidemic. So, genetics alone simply cannot explain how we went from 1 in 10,000 children with autism spectrum disorders 20 years ago to 1 in 150 today.

No one has ever identified a positive health benefit to mercury in the human body. Thus, it was sound public health policy to eliminate mercury from thermometers, blood pressure gauges, light switches, cosmetics, teething powder, horse liniment, hat-making materials, smokestack emission, and mining operations. It would also be sound public health policy to eliminate mercury from all vaccines.

But Madam Speaker, getting the mercury out of all vaccines is only the first step. We also have a responsibility to help all of the

children who have already been injured by mercury in vaccines. That is why the outcome of the Omnibus Autism Hearing is so critically important. In the 1980s, Congress created the Vaccine Injury Compensation Program to shield medical professionals and vaccine manufacturers from liability if an individual suffered an adverse event from receiving vaccines. The compensation fund, which currently contains about \$2.5 billion, is financed by a tax on pediatric vaccines. We created VICP to protect the vaccine supply and to insure that all who were injured by a vaccine would receive compensation in what was supposed to be a no-fault, easy to use manner. Congress intended for families to be compensated quickly and fairly; and when the evidence was close as to whether or not the medical condition in question was vaccine related or not—as is the case with thimerosal—the court should always err in favor of the injured. But over the years the system has broken and what was supposed to be quick and fair has become slow and contentious; which is why today 4,800 families are fighting in court to be heard. They have waited a long time for their day in court and I am pleased that the court is providing the transcripts online quickly and that audio streaming on the internet is being provided for the thousands of families who are not able to travel to Washington and actually be in the courtroom during the proceedings.

As the Omnibus hearings proceed, I hope that all of the evidence regarding vaccine injury will be received by the courts and given a full and fair review. I believe the families of these autistic children deserve to be compensated for their vaccine injury as Congress intended when it created VICP. I believe the science is there to prove this case and I am hopeful that the court will agree and at the end of this arduous process these 4,800 families will finally get justice.

ARC FUNDING

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 19, 2007

Mr. RAHALL. Madam Speaker, “a rising tide,” President Kennedy told us, “lifts all boats.” And so one of President Kennedy's legacies was created in 1965 with a unique mission to serve a unique part of the Nation, the Appalachian region.

Historically, the counties of Appalachia have “faced high levels of poverty and economic distress resulting from geographic isolation and inadequate infrastructure.”

It was with these concerns in mind that ARC was created and it is these concerns ARC has been addressing vigorously for the past 40 years.

Take for example the area of transportation, a major focus for ARC. ARC was developed, in part, because of the severe isolation experienced in Appalachia and that in order to develop Appalachia and give its people an opportunity to compete, a system of highways was needed. Enter the Appalachian Development Highway System, which was created to serve the transportation needs of Appalachian residents by assisting in the construction of highways so critically needed by Appalachian communities for economic growth and development.